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10 March 1971

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT : Requirements for Photographic Coverage
of South China

1. The following targets, if covered on a regular basis with adequate photographic resolution, are those most likely to provide indications of Chinese Communist military activities related to Indochina. In order to identify types of military equipment and provide an accurate count of transportation vehicles, ground resolution should be on the order of three feet or better.

2. The first priority targets are:

a. Chang-chiang (21-12N 110-23E). A naval headquarters, rail terminus and transshipment point for military supplies to North Vietnam.

b. Ping-hsiang (22-04N 106-44E). A transportation center and rail crossing point into North Vietnam.

c. Hokou (22-30N 103-58E). A border transportation center for rail and road traffic into North Vietnam.

d. Ssu-mao (22-47N 100-59E). A transportation center for military traffic into northwest Laos.

e. Ning-ming (22-08N 107-04E). A tactical airbase and transportation center.

f. Meng-tzu (22-22N 103-24E). A military staging area and tactical airbase near the North Vietnamese border.

This memorandum was prepared by the Office of Strategic Research and coordinated within the Directorate of Intelligence and with the Directorate of Plans.

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3. Targets of second priority include:

a. Nan-ning (22-49N 108-19E). A transportation center and military headquarters for the region. (An active SA-2 site was located near Nan-ning in 1969. This site has not been observed since.)

b. Meng-la (21-30N 101-33E). A military staging area near the Laotian border.

c. Kun-ming (25-04N 102-41E). A transportation center and military headquarters for the region.

4. Coverage of the above targets would provide information on the status of major military installations and transportation facilities adjacent to North Vietnam. It would also indicate levels of supply activity and the status of major troop deployments. Because of the absence of recent photographic coverage, however, a single mission would not enable us to detect dynamics of movement or of activity. Repeated coverage over time would enable us to establish an intelligence base against which to detect divisional movements and major changes in the level of supply activity. We could not be certain, however, of detecting the infiltration of smaller units and quantities of supplies into North Vietnam.

5. Increased coverage of transportation centers and military staging areas within North Vietnam could also provide evidence of Chinese Communist military assistance to Indochina. A better photographic base exists for targets in North Vietnam, and coverage of this area could be done on a regular basis with less risk than similar coverage of China entails. Targets in this area should include facilities where Chinese Communist forces previously were located, particularly along the major lines of communication in the northwest and northeast which connect with major transport arteries in China.

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